



# Pulse check

*Charting the course for the year ahead*

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Global Head of Institutional Business



A NEW YEAR is often likened to a blank canvas, a fresh opportunity to start anew. But as we started colouring the canvas of 2024, it became abundantly clear that our picture was already cluttered with the brushstrokes of the preceding year. The transformative potential of technological advancements we saw in 2023, along with the complex geopolitical challenges, persist in defining the burning issues of our era.

Two significant international conflicts have woven complexity into the global security landscape, casting uncertainty over economic forecasts.

Technologies have continued to evolve even faster than at any other time in history. As an example, we've seen the rollout of 5G networks expand, promising to usher in a new wave of connectivity and digital services. Advances in AI have also catapulted industries into unprecedented efficiencies yet introduced provocative ethical and social considerations.

Climate change remains at the forefront of international dialogue, with the many natural disasters of 2023 amplifying calls for accelerating adoption of sustainable practices.

Some of the most pressing challenges that we face, like cybercrime, climate change, and the possibility of other pandemics, recognize no borders. These challenges travel without passports, thus demanding global collaboration to find solutions. We live in an age where technology can facilitate such international cooperation, yet paradoxically, our world seems more divided and fragmented than ever.

Against this backdrop, the resonant theme at this year's World Economic Forum in Davos centered on the need to rebuild trust – trust in a prosperous future, trust in the ability to overcome and in the concept of trusteeship, which implores us to think expansively, transcending national prejudices and historical power dynamics.

This is a fitting theme, for it is the very loss of trust in major institutions that has given rise to post-truth realities and the misinformation era that currently drives public discourse and sentiment.

And, of course, any mention of Trust provides the perfect segway back to our own organization.

*“Our steadfast commitment to excellence is exemplified in these consistent, industry-leading results.”*

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## CELEBRATING RESILIENCE, RELATIONSHIPS AND TRUST

Coronation's journey through 2023 marked the triumphant milestone of 30 years – a testament to the resilience, longevity in business and relationships of trust that we have built with you, our valued clients.

This milestone underscored our decades-long evolution from a domestic manager into a successful and credible global player while maintaining our South African roots and central operations at home.

We also tangibly demonstrated the success of our process in re-engineering our internal operations and systems to run truly integrated multi-asset solutions after the material change in Regulation 28 in early 2022. This amendment has proved highly beneficial for our client portfolios.

To underscore this success, our flagship global multi-asset houseview portfolios have set benchmarks of excellence with unparalleled performance across all meaningful time measures. As published by the leading industry surveys in 2023, they ranked first over one year, first over five years, first over 10 years and first over 20 years.

In the past year, we have also received recognition for our initiatives to maintain and improve diversity and transformation at Coronation. Not only were we recognized with a number of prestigious domestic awards, but we also received recognition on the global stage. Our achievements are all listed in the sidebar. We are also proud to have maintained our B-BBEE Level 1 status. We are now 29% black-owned, with R266 billion, representing 42% of total AUM, being managed by black investment professionals, and R301 billion (48% of total AUM) managed by female investment professionals<sup>1</sup>.

I think it's fair to say that our steadfast commitment to excellence is exemplified in these consistent, industry-leading results.

## ONGOING TRANSFORMATION INITIATIVES

In 2023, we further fortified our robust foundation of transformation initiatives aimed at bringing about meaningful and lasting change by introducing a new project – the **Coronation Catapult programme**. The 23-month programme offers unemployed graduates the opportunity to work at a stockbroker, thanks to our partnership with these firms. Coronation is responsible for the graduates' salaries and associated costs, while stockbrokers assume responsibility for hands-on mentorship and training. Beyond contributing to transformation in the industry, this programme also creates new avenues for employment. We launched the project with 8 graduates in 2023, and another 14 joined at the outset of 2024.

### Our achievements in 2023



Winner of the European Pensions Diversity Award



Winner of the Irish Pensions Diversity Award



ABSIP Black Fund Manager of the Year\* Coronation PM Pallavi Ambekar



Ranked 1st for Gender Reporting by JSE-listed companies at the Accenture Gender Mainstreaming Awards



First place in the UN-established Women Empowerment Principles Awards for Transparency and Reporting

\*Winner of both the Global Multi-Asset and Domestic Multi-Asset categories

<sup>1</sup>As at 31 December 2023





We also endorsed the ASISA Academy's new **Fezeka Investment Management Programme**, in collaboration with Joint Prosperity. The programme targets high-potential black female graduates aspiring to a career in investment management. It offers a structured 15-month course encompassing theoretical knowledge, professional growth, and practical work exposure at leading investment management firms. In 2024, we are expanding our involvement by hosting a number of graduates in our offices and actively mentoring the participants.

Over recent years, Coronation also introduced several programmes to aid early career development with the ultimate goal of increasing the number of female and black employees in senior positions in Coronation. An example is the **Aspiring Leader Project (ALP)**, an initiative that was designed to inspire innovation and build confidence with a focus on self-awareness and development. This programme was developed for employees who hold a level of influence within the business but do not necessarily have any direct reports. Since inception in 2018, 55 ALP alumni have benefited from the programme, of whom 64% are black and 49% female.

Another successful ongoing programme is the **Portfolio Manager Accelerate Programme (PMAP)**, which serves to provide aspiring and promising black and female investment professionals with the opportunity to gain in-depth portfolio management skills and exposure in a shorter time frame while still benefitting from Coronation's established investment framework and support.

We are mindful that for transformation to really be successful, the seeds of change must be sown long before graduates contemplate future employers. This is precisely why our early career interventions such as our **Coronation Exceptional Students Bursary Programme**, established in 1993, holds such significance. 144 students from underprivileged areas across South Africa have been given the chance to achieve their dream of a better future through the bursary programme.

We also offer **internships** that allow for training and development of graduates in different departments at Coronation. 94 interns have been hired as at 30 September 2023, of whom 89% are black and 53% are black women.

Participants in these programmes can attest to how these initiatives have bolstered their careers, and you can hear directly from them [in this video](#).

## NAVIGATING THE REALITIES OF OUR LANDSCAPE

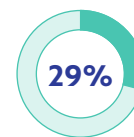
We are navigating through current economic uncertainties, a changing regulatory landscape and a rising cost environment. Through all this, Coronation stays committed to investing in the pillars that hold our business to a world-class standard: upholding our promise of unmatched service, superior investment performance and always putting our clients first.

To this end, we have invested judiciously in our key capabilities. A key area of investment is young professionals who will keep driving the transformation necessary in our business. IT has also been an important area, with R224 million invested here in 2023. We have also continued to invest in our global capabilities and our global fund range, client service, regulatory compliance as well as cyber security and fraud prevention. That's significant in this environment where most businesses are looking to cut costs and jobs.

As we stand at this complex juncture, I recall the words commonly attributed to Abraham Lincoln, 'The best way to predict the future is to create it.' These words echo through the ages, and they serve to remind us that our collective actions today shape the world of tomorrow. Now more than ever, we must remember that each of us is an active player in history in the making, and we can contribute to achieving positive outcomes for generations to come.

*Kirshni*

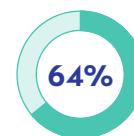
## CELEBRATING DIVERSITY



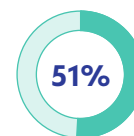
*black-owned*

**R266 bn**  
*AUM managed by black investment professionals*

**R301 bn**  
*AUM managed by female investment professionals*



*of our employees are black*



*of our employees are female*

\*This article is an edited version of a message delivered by Kirshni Totaram at TI with Coronation 2024.



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